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ABSTRACT

This activities guide was produced for use in the Illinois Right to Read Week and includes ideas for numerous activities for schools and the community to encourage reading. It also suggests a series of reading incentive programs for a variety of age groups including adults. The many activities suggested as possibilities for schools include the following: having special reading days, encouraging reading at home, making a diorama of a scene from a favorite book, and creating a student book exchange area. Suggestions for community activities include asking the school board to recognize Illinois Right to Read Week, compiling a directory of services available for adults in need of basic skills training, sponsoring a story book parade, encouraging local merchants to feature book themes in their window displays, and asking the mayor to proclaim Right to Read Week. Among reading incentive programs suggested are bumper stickers, having well-known athletes encourage young people to read, holding school and library reading contests, and holding a young authors' conference. (IJ)

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READING ACTIVITIES GUIDE FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

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DEPARTMENT OF LEA SERVICES
Springfield, Illinois

1979

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RIGHT TO READ WEEK RESOLUTION

The Illinois State Board of Education has stated that improving reading and literacy is a top educational priority in the State; and

The Illinois State Board of Education supports efforts by the Illinois Right to Read Program to offer assistance to all schools that will increase and enhance opportunities available to community members wishing to develop their reading proficiency and enjoyment.

Therefore, the Illinois State Board of Education directs the Illinois Office of Education to assist in the planning and provision of reading and literacy activities during the Illinois Right to Read Week of May 6-12, 1979; and

Encourages all segments of each community, including the schools, interested groups and professional associations, families and individuals, to participate fully in the planned activities for the Illinois Right to Read Week; and

Directs that this resolution be distributed to local superintendents and boards of education and all communities at large throughout the State.

I

READING
ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOLS

ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOLS

The success of the Illinois Reading Awareness Campaign depends upon students and teachers throughout the state. It is assumed that the following suggestions will serve as a catalyst in creating excitement about the special reading week that will result in an on-going interest in reading for youth and adults alike.

Decorate for Reading

-Decorate your bulletin boards with reading themes.

-Each teacher could decorate his/her door with book jackets from a series of books, i.e., Dr. Suess books, Sherlock Holmes books, etc.

A Soap Opera

During a special time during the day, have the principal or the school librarian read a story over the intercom system. The story should be read in installments to last a week. As follow-up, ask the students to illustrate their favorite episode.

A Story Festival

Teachers from every grade level choose a theme for the festival, then make characters which depict the theme. These characters are to be large enough to serve as centers. The children will write stories around the theme. The stories will be attached to the characters. The character centers are then scheduled into the classrooms so that the children can read them.

The Bookworm

Bookworms are easy and very decorative. Start by making an animated worm's face and have children make the body and circles which have the title and author of books they have read.

Special Reading Days

During Right to Read Week each day can be used to highlight some facet of reading. First Day, "Read to Find Information Day," students exchange trivia questions which could only be answered by looking up material in special books. Second Day, "This Is Your Life--Library," open house in the library with special activities. Third Day, "How to Day," each class will display "How To" books on a certain subject and will give demonstrations in that subject. Fourth Day, "An Illustration Contest," students make posters, mobiles, etc. about their favorite books. Fifth Day, "You Are What You Read," students dress up like their favorite book character.

Reading at Home

Encourage students to read at home and involve parents in the process by having the student make an oral book report to their

parents. The parent in turn will send a signed note with the title of the book. When the student presents the note to the teacher, he/she receives a "free time pass" for 5 to 15 minutes. These passes may be used to read other books, visit a favorite center, go to the library, etc.

A Diorama Display

Have students pick a favorite book or story and make a diorama depicting a scene. In making the display the student will write a brief description of what is happening in the diorama. Display the dioramas during Right to Read Week.

Lunch with Parents

Have a luncheon or tea for parents during Right to Read Week. Show slides of reading classrooms and/or videotapes of these classes. By giving parents a realistic picture of reading classes, parent awareness and interest should increase. To involve the children in the process let older students plan and edit the slide show and record the audio portion.

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

Several classes come together for a report on historical fiction. make a poster advertising the book and possibly others by the same author. The teacher or presenter is dressed as the main character or one of the characters in the book. Read orally to the group an interesting part of the story, but stop at a strategic point. By giving the students just enough to tease their interests, the children are motivated to read more about the character's life and times.

S.S.R.

Institute a Sustained Silent Reading Program:

a. Set aside a time for daily reading. (15-20 minutes)

b. Everyone, including the teacher, reads in a book of his/her choice.

c. Teachers should have available a variety of books on different topics and at different levels for those students who forget to bring a book.

d. While no book report or project is required at the conclusion of a book, it is wise to allow time for readers to share book recommendations, to read meaningful passages, and/or to see what others are reading.

Jr. High Reading-Writing Rhyme

Have students write a familiar nursery rhyme as a modern-day news article. Distribute the news articles throughout the school and

ask students to guess the correct rhymes. Each of the first twenty-five students getting all the rhymes correct wins an inexpensive paperback book.

Read-In

Have older students meet kindergarteners in the gym. Older students draw a kindergartener's name from a hat and take that student to a spot in the gym and read him/her a story.

Book-Fair

During Right to Read week have a continuous book fair featuring new and used books.

Library Tour

Have a group of primary children make a tour of the community library. While at the library, have a story hour and encourage each child to apply for a library card.

Book Commercials

Have students write a commercial about their favorite book. The students then select five commercials per grade. Play these commercials throughout the school day over the intercom (if there are 5 grades per school = 25 commercials, five commercials a day). The books advertised should be available in the school and the local library.

Poster Parade

Ask each student to make a poster of their favorite book. During Right to Read week, display all the posters in the hallway, cafeteria and gym.

Do You Know Why?

Plan bulletin boards throughout the school building with pictures of book characters. Under the character, have a caption which reads, "Do you know why (the character) did (whatever is in the story)? Read _____(book) to find out."

A Book Comes Alive

A few weeks before Right to Read Week, poll the school to find out the students' most popular book (to do this you may want to give the students a list of ten books to vote on). When a book is selected, get a few students to write a script based on the book. During Right to Read Week, present the play to the whole school.

Mini Reviews

Students from every grade level dress up as book characters and go from room to room during certain scheduled periods of the day and give mini reviews of the books they represent.

Reading and Eating

During Right to Read Week, rewrite the menu or if possible select foods that were eaten by a famous book character.

Special Features

The school librarian selects a book from each section of the library, i.e., history, fiction, political science, etc. Plan a display featuring a copy of the book selected along with artifacts discussed in the book, and pictures of principle characters and places.

School Book Review

Publish a school book review magazine, where students can submit short reviews of their favorite books.

Pen Pals

Schools from opposite sides of town can exchange the names of students. Students will write their pen pals about the books they have read.

Mac's Publishing Company

Students make own books, edit (parent volunteers help), and bind. When in perfect order they are stamped in, carded, filed and then put on library shelves along with other books. Even a copyright date is included through the use of a makeshift rubber stamp.

Involve the Content Areas

Display and "advertise" books of fiction and non-fiction.

a. Choral and Instrumental: biographies of composers, lyricists, etc.; "how to" books on valve repair, reed making, instrument care, etc.

b. Physical Education: Biographies of athletes - includes all areas, not just competitive sports (i.e., Martha Graham - dance). Books describing a variety of games and activities. Fiction and non-fiction on diets, drugs, exercise, fluorides, smoking, etc.

c. Art: Biographies of famous artists in a variety of mediums. Display books describing art works, museums, galleries, etc. Provide "how to" books on artistic design, construction, restoration, etc.

d. Foreign Language: Circulate travel books relating to the geographic area where the language is/was spoken. Provide biographies of famous citizens.

e. Sciences: Provide biographies on important individuals in your field. Display books on inventions and discoveries. Locate "how to" books related to your field. (Build a Bat Blind..., Construct a Telegraph Receiver, etc.)

f. Mathematics: Locate biographies of important individuals in the field. Pose questions that will cause students to read in a variety of books. Locate "how to" books which give directions using the metric system.

g. Social Studies: Make available biographies of important individuals in your field. Find books of literature, music and art from the country under study. Share books about the Indian tribes of Illinois. Provide "how to" books relative to your field (...Enter the Stock Market...Run for Senator... Locate Indian Relics).

Call an Author

Arrange a conference phone call to an author and broadcast it over the intercom. Have available student questions which are answered during the interview.

A Birthday Gift

Encourage the donation of a book to the school library to celebrate a student's birthday. The donated book has a book plate with the student's name and date donated.

A Special Place

Create "Special Places to Read" in and around the school building.

Balloons, Balloons

Release helium-filled balloons with a note inside about a favorite book the releaser has read. Include the name and address of the person sending the balloon to encourage possible response from the receiver.

A School Collection of Stories

Every classroom will compile a set of stories they have written in a notebook with a decorative cover. The notebook pages should be laminated and substantially bound. These will be placed in the library for check-out purposes under the school name such as "The Wilson School Collection." If several schools in the district are involved, books can be swapped between schools.

Swap-A-Book

Set up a student book exchange center. Students may bring to school any paperback book they wish to exchange. A special location, such as a corner of the learning center, may be set up as

the "Exchange Center." The student is given a certificate for each book he or she brings in. Books should be marked in some way to show that they are "exchange books," to distinguish them from other paperbacks in the library. The student turns in his/her certificate when he/she selects a book from the exchange center.

PAPERBACK BOOK EXCHANGE
This certificate is good for one paperback book.

Name_____
Date_____
Grade_____
Room_____

Parent's Make and Take

Set aside an evening where parents are invited to come to the school to make games for their children to use at home. To make this go smoothly, parents are provided with a list of at least three skills which need to be improved by their child. Games are displayed by teachers with directional sheets. Materials to make games are provided by the school and the parents. Parents and teachers are encouraged to bring refreshments to share with the group.

Parent Poll

Parents are often told what to do at home with their children to help them with reading. Give each parent a questionnaire on their child's favorite reading activities at home. Once these are collected, mimeograph the activity list and distribute to the parents.

Retired Teachers

Encourage retired teachers to become involved in the schools again by asking them to serve as story ladies or gentlemen by reading to young students.

Monthly Newsletter for Teachers

Circulate a newsletter written by and for teachers in the district or on the individual building level that features new and interesting reading tips and accomplishments of teachers.

Encourage Letter Writing

Set up a "Dear Abby" letter column on a vacant bulletin board in a hallway. Have students write out their problems or concerns to the fictitious person. Letters are answered by a panel of students from different grade levels and posted on the board. The composition of the answering panel will change weekly so that many students will get a chance to write answers.

II

READING
ACTIVITIES FOR THE COMMUNITY

ACTIVITIES FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

All segments of the community are encouraged to participate fully in the activities of the Illinois Right to Read Week. This special week should provide an excellent opportunity to work with the community and to establish a more positive understanding of public education among citizens. By involving the local people in education, they will in turn get an close-up look at opportunities available to students. The following are a few activities with which the community and school can become involved with reading education in your area.

Parent In-Service

Encourage parent groups to plan meetings with reading education themes such as "How to Select a Book Gift," "How to Play Reading Games," "How to Listen to a Reader," "How to Read to a Child," or "How to Question a Child to Improve Comprehension in Reading."

Involve the Board

Involve school boards by giving a commitment for the district to recognize Illinois Right to Read Week. They could be instrumental in getting the local business community to participate in Right to Read Week activities. Perhaps some of them would be available for recording their choice of books for students to listen to, or to be aired on radio or TV.

Directory of Free Reading Services for Adults

Compile information for easy referral to those persons in your community in need of basic skills/citizenship/GED/ESL training. List organizations in the community that provide services at no charge. The first step in compiling your list is to contact the Adult and Continuing Education Section at the Illinois Office of Education, Springfield, (217)782-3370.

Books As Prizes

When your school or community organization is giving a prize in any type of contest, choose a special book to be given away as the prize. Books can easily be autographed to state the person's accomplishments and are lasting keepsakes.

An Invitation

During Right to Read Week, have students write special invitations to their parents and a person in their neighborhood to get involved in the school. The invitation will ask them to volunteer time for tutoring, going on field trips, just visiting the school and telling the class about interesting trips they've taken, or about their jobs, etc.

It's in the Bag

Include grocery stores in the effort by asking them to print grocery bags with "Reading Is Our Bag," or "Have You Had Your Reading Break Today?" Stuff brochures in sacks. Display posters, etc. in stores.

Book Stores

Have the local book stores display the slogan, "Have You Had Your Reading Break Today?"

Eat and Read

Contact and involve beverage or fast food firms to do promotions for reading and/or Illinois Right to Read Week on cans or placemat designs.

Video Spots

Choose students to dress up as book characters and appear in 60-second spots on local television giving mini-book reviews.

A Story Book Parade

Contact the manager of the local shopping mall for permission to have a story book parade through the local shopping area. Have the children in your school or community dress up as their favorite book character. If costumes are not available, sandwich boards can be made from poster-board.

Reading at the Mall

Plan a reading extravaganza with local shopping mall authorities. Display stories written by students, have a parents' information booth, a Right to Read information booth, have high school students and adults read favorite children's stories in the reading corner, and have merchants display special reading materials, etc. There is no end to the display for your reading extravaganza.

Swap Shop

In bank lobbys, shopping malls, wherever there is a large space, display used paper backs and have them available for people to come in and swap their books for free.

Activities for Young Children

Compile a directory of activities for young children in your community. In your directory, include arts and crafts programs, farms, libraries, museums, music, sports, day camps, television, theatre, tours, etc., anything that would entertain or be informative to the young child. For all listings, be sure to give a short description of the activity prices, contact person and location.

Library Hour

Have parents, former teachers, and other interested adults have "a library hour" each Saturday at the public library or any community meeting hall. Films can be shown, books read, puppet shows held, etc. If a puppet show is held, children can later make their own puppets from paper bags. When a book is read to them, the children can draw pictures of it or make up a new ending.

Adopt-A-Grandparent

For 1/2 hour, students go to an elderly housing complex or the residents come to the school. The elderly read to the children 20 minutes and the children read to them 10 minutes.

The Community and SSR

Advertise that reading should be a part of everyone's leisure time. During Right to Read Week everyone should set aside 1/2 hour each day for Silent Sustained Reading.

Read to the Shut-In

Make arrangements for older students and adult volunteers to read to the sick and shut-ins at hospitals and in nursing and private homes.

Information to New Parents

Place brochures on reading readiness (Right to Read has five brochures on reading readiness) in the offices of gynocologists and pediatricians for parents-to-be and new parents.

Public Library Reading Club

Encourage the public libraries to plan some type of reading club for students with a reward for a certain number of books read.

Lists of Good Children's Books

Have displays of books and other materials for reading at a local mall or store with a handout of lists of good books for children.

Proclamation from the Mayor

Encourage the mayor to make a public statement reminding people of Right to Read Week.

Summer Scoop

During the summer, encourage the local paper to run excerpts from children's novels in the paper. Also suggest that the local newspaper sponsor fun pages during the week or on week-ends with language-arts games.

Window Dressing

During Right to Read Week encourage local merchants to feature book themes in their store windows. If this is not possible, have them at least feature the slogan somewhere in their store, "Have You Had Your Reading Break Today?"

News Flash

During Right to Read Week, ask the local newspaper to run articles on the importance of reading and publicity on the activities planned for Right to Read week by the schools and the community.

Young Authors

Display the books of local representatives to the state Young Authors Conference in the main public library.

III

READING INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

READING INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

To provide further coordination of reading efforts throughout the state and within the local districts, the following activities are suggested. Also, if there are activities which are successful in your community, please add to this guide and share them with us for dissemination throughout the state.

Athletes for Reading

During the spring and summer months, baseball players from the Chicago Cubs and White Sox will be on T.V. to encourage young people to read.

Bumper Stickers

Bumper stickers, "Have You Had Your Reading Break Today?", are available from the Illinois Office of Education.

State Board of Education

The State Board of Education has resolved May 6-12 as Illinois Right to Read Week. (See page 1)

Young Authors Conference

...is a statewide program sponsored by the Illinois Office of Education and the Language Special Interest Council which gives recognition to the writings of young children. Hundreds of Illinois children are invited to attend a one-day conference in the spring as representative writers from their local districts. During the conference children are encouraged to share ideas, thoughts, and feelings. Groups are established during the day's activities to allow for personal growth and development. Adults who accompany children to the conference attend a group session designed to gain further insights into children's writings. For more information, contact Carolyn Farrar at the Illinois Office of Education (217)782-2826.

Reading incentive programs for individual schools and districts:

Library Reading Club (High School)

- State the requirements: i.e., (the student must read 10 books from the library and pass a test on how to use the library). Members keep their own reading records in the special file box in the library.

- What are the rewards:
  1) The student's name will be added to a special plaque in the school lobby.
  2) Picture in the school year book.

3) Special certificates given at the end of the year in an assembly.
4) The pleasure and employment of reading.

What if more books are read:

Students are encouraged to read past the 10 required books. The top 10 or so readers receive a special pin or trophy at the end of the year. Also for each additional 5 books read, a star is placed by the student's name.

LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE--READ!

Library Reading Club (Elementary School)

Send a letter home to all the parents explaining the purpose of the club and enlist their cooperation. Parents and the student are asked to complete a form to indicate their interest in participating in the club. The children pick up a time slip each week when they visit the library. These slips are then returned at the end of the week indicating how much time was spent in reading as well as the titles of all books read. A membership certificate is awarded when the student has completed five hours of reading. After 10 hours, a sticker is added to the certificate. At the end of the school year, 10 new books will be awarded to five children in the primary and upper grades who have read the most hours. During the year, construct a book chain in the library with one link for each book read by members of the club.

GRAB ME--READ ME--LOVE ME Reading Contest

The purpose of the contest is to increase the overall number of books read in a school. The school should select a goal such as 5,000 books in a six-week period.

Rewards - Rules

a) 1 treat of the student's choice is given for the first 10 books read, listed, and signed by a parent on a 5"x7" card turned in.

b) A second treat is earned by the student's reading 20 more books, now totalling a number of 30.

c) Each student that has a book read and signed by the parent makes a segment of the worm which is put in the hall.

d) The school should create a reading symbol and mount it on cardboard. The reading symbol is hung on the door of the room that has the highest number of books read for the week. There are three competition groups, K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Each class will have a high reader for the week, which receives a "reading pin" award.

e) A thermometer is placed in the hall and colored in as the total number of books is added in each week and the school gets closer to its goal.

f) Three large posters of the reading symbol are passed from one room to another for reading the highest number of books that week in the 3 competition groups. Each class has a high reader for the week; this person receives a "reading pin" award.

g) Each student keeps a record of the books read on a 5"x7" card. The title of the book is placed on the card and signed by a parent, the teacher, or an older brother or sister to verify the book was read.

h) An older brother or sister is allowed to read to a younger child, and both receive credit for the same book.

i) A record is kept in the library of the titles each child reads. This is done mainly to keep track of which books were read the most, and to be sure older children do not record the same titles several times.

j) The "high reader" of the contest, in each grade, receives a book of his/her choice from the library at the end of the contest.

* This contest idea came from Early Years, "Reading Up a Storm," November, 1977.

SNOOPY'S SUPER READERS

"Snoopy's Super Readers" is a Read-A-Thon type activity designed to encourage children to read.

Provide guidelines specifically denoting starting and ending dates, procedures and award criteria to the students along with a list of the available books. When the students complete a book, return it to the library where the aide stamps the date next to the corresponding title on the student's list.

To provide students with adequate time to read the books they check out, establish a limit of 2 books per day.

As children reach each established plateau, they post their name on a bulletin board designed for this purpose.

At the conclusion of the Read-A-Thon, all participants receive a "Certificate of Participation." Those who attained the highest plateau also receive a laminated bookmark and have their names posted in the hall outside the learning center.

A vote is taken at the end of the activity for the "Most Favorite Charlie Brown Book" and the winning title posted in the hall.

RIF, READING IS FUNDAMENTAL

Is a national, nonprofit organization designed to motivate children to read by giving them the opportunity to choose and own inexpensive books. Projects are operated almost entirely by volunteers, educators, service groups, librarians, and most especially parents. Parental involvement is a key element of RIF.

National RIF aids these programs by providing technical assistance through direct contact with local programs. It provides information regarding qualifying and applying for the inexpensive Book Distribution Program, which makes Federal funds available to match local funds for the purchase of books. Also, National RIF works with other national organizations that are interested in the development of new reading motivation programs.

For more information write:

Program Planning and Development
Illinois Office of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777
(217)782-2826

Reading Is Fundamental
L'Enfant 2500
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, D.C. 20560
(202)381-6117

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY COMMITMENT SHEET

_____School District/Community

Organization located in _____County at the

following address:

_____

_____

_____
(zip code please)

We will be involved in the Illinois Right to Read Week, in the following manner:

_____ School Activities
_____ Community Activities
_____ Reading Incentive Programs
_____ Others, please specify

Please return to:

Carolyn Farrar
Right to Read
Illinois Office of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777

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